



# Resource Family Connection

## News, Events, and Information Benefiting the Children of Waukesha County November and December, 2021



### Foster Care and the Holidays By: Dr. John N. DeGarmo, Ed.D.

The stockings were hung, by the chimney with care, in hopes that... In hopes of what? For many children who have been placed into the foster care system, they have come from homes where there was no Christmas, there was no hope. They have come from families that did not celebrate a holiday. They have come from environments where there were no presents, no tree. They have come from homes where there was no holiday joy or love.

The Holiday season is upon us. Christmas, Hanukah, New Years, Kwanzaa; these are times that can be extremely difficult for many foster children. During this time of Holiday Cheer, many foster children are faced with the realization that they will not be "home for the holidays," so to speak, with their biological family members. When they wake up Christmas morning, and are surrounded by people who just may be strangers to them, strangers who are laughing and having fun, it can be a very difficult time for them, indeed. To be sure, it is a day that is a stark reminder to these children that they are not with their own family. It is during the holidays when families are supposed to be together, yet these children in care are not. They are not with their families and they may not know when they will see them next.

Along with this, foster children also struggle with trying to remain loyal to their birth parents while enjoying the holiday season with their foster family. There are those moments when a child from foster care may feel guilty for experiencing joy and laughter with their foster family, they may feel that they are not only letting their birth mother or father down, they might even be betraying their birth parents and member of their biological family, causing even more grief, guilt, and anxiety within the child during this season of holiday joy. Indeed, this can be a very emotionally stressful time for all involved.

As one who has fostered many children, myself, during the holiday time, I have found that it is important to address these issues beforehand. Before Thanksgiving, before Christmas, before Hanukah, even before family members and friends come to visit, foster parents need to prepare their foster child ahead of time.

To begin with, foster parents can best help their foster child by spending time and talking about the holiday. Perhaps the holiday being celebrated in their new home is one that their birth family never celebrated, or is a holiday that is unfamiliar with them. Let the foster child know how your family celebrates the holiday, what traditions your family celebrate, and include the child in it.

Ask your foster child about some of the traditions that his family had, and try to include some of them into your own home during the holiday. This will help him not only feel more comfortable in your own home during this time, but also remind him that he is important, and that his birth family is important, as well. Even if his traditions are ones that you do not celebrate in your own home, try to include some of his into your own holiday celebration, in some way and some fashion.

Far too many children have come to my own home and have never celebrated their birthday, have never sung a Christmas carol, have never opened a present. Perhaps you have had similar experiences, as well. Sadly, this is not uncommon for children in foster care. It is important to keep in mind that many foster children may come from a home where they did not celebrate a particular season, nor have any traditions in their own home. What might be common in your own home may be completely new and even strange to your foster child. This often

includes religious meanings for the holiday you celebrate. Again, take time to discuss the meaning about your beliefs to your foster child beforehand.

More than likely, your foster child will have feelings of sadness and grief, as he is separated from his own family during this time of family celebration.

After all, he is separated from his family during a time that is supposed to be centered AROUND family. However much you provide for him, however much love you give to him, you are still not his family.

Like so many children in foster care, they want to go home, to live with their family members, despite the abuse and trauma they may have suffered from them, and despite all that you can and do offer and provide for him. Therefore, this time of holiday joy is especially difficult.

You can help him by allowing him to talk about his feelings during the holidays. Ask him how he is doing, and recognize that he may not be happy, nor enjoy this special time.

Look for signs of depression, sadness, and other emotions related to these. Allow him space to privately grieve, if he needs to, and be prepared if he reverts back to some behavior difficulties he had when he first arrived into your home. You may find that he becomes upset, rebellious, or complains a lot. Along with this, he may simply act younger than he is during this time. After all, he is trying to cope with not being with his own family during this time when families get together. These feelings and these actions are normal, and should be expected. You can also help your foster child by sending some cards and/or small gifts and presents to their own parents and birth family members. A card or small gift to his family members can provide hope and healing for both child and parent, and help spread some of the holiday cheer that is supposed to be shared with all.

Each family has that crazy old Aunt Ethel, loud and obnoxious Uncle Fred, and the ever hard of hearing and over whelming Grandma Lucy.

Your family is used to these relatives and their personalities, your child in foster care is not.

If you have family members visit your home, prepare your foster child for this beforehand. Let him know that the normal routine in your home may become a little "crazy" during this time, that it may become loud, and describe some of the "characters" from your own family that may be coming over to visit. Remind him of the importance of using good behavior and manners throughout this period. Along with this, remind your own family members that your foster child is a member of your family and should be treated as such.

Remind them that he is to be treated as a member of the family, and not to judge him or his biological family members, or fire questions at him. This also includes gift giving. If your own children should be receiving gifts from some of your family members, your foster child should, as well. Otherwise, your foster child is going to feel left out, and his sadness and grief will only increase.

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## Foster Care and The Holidays

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Be prepared, though, for some in your family to not have presents and gifts for him. Have some extra ones already wrapped, and hidden away somewhere, ready to be brought out, just in case.

With a little preparation beforehand from you, this season of joy can be a wonderful time for your foster child, one that may last in his memory for a life time, as well as in your memory, too. After all, the gift of love is one that can be shared, not only during the holidays, but all year long.

## Local Christmas Parades

### City of Waukesha Christmas Parade

Winding through the Main Street of downtown, this parade features marching bands, floats, and a special appearance from Santa. Kids should bring letters for Santa. Come early to enjoy pre-parade family festivities.

*Date:* November 21, 2021

*Time:* 4:00 p.m.

*Where:* Downtown Waukesha

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.waukeshaworks.com/2021-christmas-parade.html>

### East Troy Christmas Parade Train

Join us for a holiday tradition dating back to 1972! Spectators can catch a glimpse of Santa safely from inside their heated vehicle along County Road ES. The parade train departs the Elegant Farmer at 5:30 p.m. and continues non-stop until arriving at approximately 6:30 p.m. in East Troy.

*Date:* December 4, 2021

*Time:* 5:30 p.m.

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.easttroyrr.org/christmas-parade-train.html>

### Oconomowoc Christmas Parade

Downtown Oconomowoc Christmas parade lights up the holiday season. The parade is lighted as it travels through downtown. You not only see the dazzling floats, but you'll see a live nativity head through downtown as they prepare to present at local church St. Matthew's following the parade. And of course Santa makes it! He sends his elves out ahead of him to get your Christmas wish lists, so be sure to bring them!

*Date:* December 4, 2021

*Time:* 5:00 p.m.

*Where:* Downtown Oconomowoc

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.visitoconomowoc.com/Calendar.aspx?EID=559>

## Well Badger Resource Center

Well Badger Resource Center is your one-stop connection to community, social, health, and government programs. A place to find what you need, when you need it. <http://wellbadger.org>

## Christmas Clearing Council

Christmas Clearing Council promotes and coordinates giving to families in need during the Christmas season. They have a clearinghouse to match families with local groups, families, or businesses. They also coordinate a toy shop event for unmatched families. **Apply Online by November 15 at:** <https://www.christmasclearingcouncil.org/>

## Drive Through Light Displays

### Winter Wonders Drive Through Light Show

*Dates:* November 19, 2021 - January 2, 2022

*Time:* 5:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

*Where:* Whitnall Park, 6751 S. 92nd St, Franklin, WI

*For Additional Information, Including Cost:* <https://www.winterwonders.org/>

### Ingleside Country Christmas

*Dates:* November 26, 2021 - January 1, 2022 (closed December 2)

*Time:* 5:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. (Sun-Thurs); 5:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. (Fri, Sat, Holidays)

*Where:* Ingleside Hotel, 2810 Golf Rd, Pewaukee, WI

*For Additional Information, Including Cost:* <https://www.thecountrychristmas.com/>

## 9 Kid-Friendly New Year's Eve Party Ideas

By: Megan Cooley

Since midnight is past most kids' bedtimes, they can't participate in the Champagne toasts of New Year's Eve. However, there are still plenty of ways kids can celebrate the new year. Savor the holiday with just your family, or, if you love an extra loud crowd, let a few of their friends join in on the festivities.

Here are nine fun ideas to create New Year's Eve memories with kids.

### ✧ Have a Mock Midnight

If you know your kids won't be able to stay up until midnight, don't hesitate to fudge on the time a bit. Rather than waiting for clocks to strike actual midnight, do your countdown a few hours earlier instead. Then the kids can go to bed happy that they got to participate in the tradition, and the adults can stay up to celebrate the real midnight if they wish. You can even create a special January 1 tradition with a New Year's Day breakfast for those early-to-bed, early-to-rise kids.

### ✧ Sound the Alarm

As your party guests to bring as many alarm clocks as they can, and set them all to go off at midnight (or earlier if you're celebrating a faux midnight). When the alarms start ringing, bang pots and pans, toot horns, and make a general ruckus as you hug, kiss, and wish everyone a happy year. Then, send the kids to run around and silence the alarms.

### ✧ Create a Piñata Ball

Is it really New Year's if you don't watch a ball drop? For your kid-friendly party, consider making a ball-shaped piñata that resembles the big ball that drops in New York City. You can even have the kids help you decorate it with paint, sparkly beads, and glitter. Then, at midnight, let the kids bang it open to find candy and trinkets inside.

### ✧ Drop Balloons

Balloon games are always a treat at children's parties, and a balloon drop is perfect for New Year's Eve. Suspend a bunch of balloons in a net above the guests, and then release them at midnight. An alternative is to fill balloons with confetti below you blow them up, and then have the kids pop them at midnight.

### ✧ Give a Toast

Just because kids can't drink alcoholic beverages doesn't mean they can't enjoy a toast. Pass around glasses of sparkling cider, ginger ale, or some other bubbly mocktail. Then, have the kids take turns toasting one another with compliments, making sure everyone is included. After each toast, everyone can take a sip of their drink.

### ✧ Scrapbook the Year's Memories

Dedicate part of your New Year's Eve party to scrapbooking with the kids. Have guests bring photos of fond memories from the previous year. Then, offer each person a blank scrapbook page and other scrapbooking materials. They can add their photos to the page, along with written accomplishments from the year and resolutions for the next year. Finally, let everyone share what's on their finished pages.

### ✧ Throw a Slumber Party

Turn your New Year's Eve party into a slumber party. In fact, you can start the theme right from the beginning by having guests arrive in their pajamas. Pitch a tent or put out sleeping bags, blankets, and pillows in your living room, so everyone can crash together. Be sure to plan food for a fun breakfast in the morning.

### ✧ Dress Up

Maybe a pajama party isn't exactly your style. You always can go the opposite route and invite kids to dress in their fanciest clothes. You can even provide some dress-up attire at the party, such as crowns and feather boas, for the kids to wear. Then, have a photo shoot - or even a photo booth - where everyone can show off their look.

### ✧ Have a Game Marathon

If your guests are pushing to stay up until midnight, they'll need some fun games to occupy the hours leading up to the countdown. Board games are a great option, as they're engaging for kids and usually take a good chunk of time to complete. Karaoke is also a fun and animated way to pass the time. And a dance party will keep everyone awake and moving. You can even hand out glow sticks and turn out the lights to play some glow-in-the-dark party games.

## Indoor Play

### Parents Night Out - YMCA Pabst Farms

Drop your kids off at the YMCA and have a date night, run errands, or have a quiet night at home. Parents Night Out is a safe and fun night for children to play and meet new friends

*When:* November 12, November 19, December 10, 2021

*Time:* 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

*Fee:* \$20/member; \$30/non-member

*For Additional Information and To Register:* <https://www.glcymca.org/programs/child-care-and-camps/parents-night-out>

### The Big Backyard

Come join us year-round to run, climb, ride, slide, and have a blast at our indoor playground. The Big Backyard brings the outdoors inside with huge play equipment, riding toys, balls, playhouses, infant toys, and more.

*Where:* 2857 S. 160th St, New Berlin, WI

*Fee:* \$8/child; Adults are Free

*For Additional Information:* <http://thebigbackyardwi.com/>

### The Children's Play Gallery

The Children's Play Gallery is a children's museum dedicated to the education and development of young children through hands-on, creative and interactive play, adding value to the entire family.

*Where:* 126 E. Wisconsin Ave., Oconomowoc

*Fee:* \$11.50/child; Adults are Free

*For Additional Information:* <https://thechildrensplaygallery.com/>

### Lotza Fun Room

Indoor playroom for babies, toddlers, and children under 5. The playroom consists of a ball pit, bounce house, theatrical stage, and playland. Plus, a large selection of toys of every type!

*Where:* S81W19079 Apollo Dr, Muskego, WI

*When:* Monday - Friday

*Time:* 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

*Fee:* \$5.50/person

*For Additional Information:* <https://lotzafunroom.com/>

### Monkey Joe's Waukesha

Our play area of wall-to-wall jumping, sliding, and bouncing fun features inflatable slides, jumps, and obstacle courses. Unlimited play time.

*Where:* 2040 W. Bluemound Rd, Waukesha, WI

*Fee:* \$10.99/child during the week; \$12.99/child on weekends; Adults are Free

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.monkeyjoes.com/locations/waukesha>

## Ice Skating

### Eble Ice Arena

Learn to skate, public skate, hockey camps, and more!

*Where:* 19400 W. Bluemound Rd, Brookfield, WI

*Fee:* \$6/admission; \$3/skate rental

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/ebleicearena/>

### Mullett Center

Learn to skate, learn to play hockey, open public skate times, skating programs, and more!

*Where:* 700 North Ave, Hartland, WI

*For Additional Information:* <https://mulletticecenter.com/>

### Naga-Waukee Park Ice Arena

Learn to skate, public skate, hockey camps, and more!

*Where:* 2699 Golf Rd, Delafield, WI

*Fee:* \$6/admission; \$3/skate rental

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/nagawaukeeicearena>

## National Adoption Day Celebration

*Where:* Juvenile Courthouse, 521 Riverview Ave, Waukesha, WI

*Date:* November 22, 2021

*Time:* Presentation at 11:00 a.m., Refreshments to follow



## Waukesha County Parks Fun

### Science Fest

Waukesha County's Science Fest is a celebration that connects people with science, technology, engineering, art, and math (the STEAM disciplines) in fun and exciting ways. Attendees of all ages are encouraged to explore Under the Lens and engage in a variety of interactive activities and discover how science mixes into our everyday lives and shapes our future.

*When:* November 6, 2021

*Time:* 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

*Fee:* Free

*Where:* Retzer Nature Center, S14W28167 Madison St, Waukesha, WI

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/landandparks/park-system/find-a-park/retzer-nature-center/specialevents/science-fest/>

### Sledding Hills

Our sledding hills are perfect for winter enthusiasts of all ages! Sleds, tubes, and snowboards allowed on the designated sledding hill.

*Time:* Sunrise - 10:00 p.m. (Year-Round)

*Fee:* \$6/car, \$25/bus

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/landandparks/park-system/winter-activities/sleddinghills/>

### Thankful for Parks Free Entry Weekend

Get outside and enjoy free entry at Waukesha County Park System's nine fee-based parks over the Thanksgiving weekend!

*When:* November 26 - 28, 2021

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.waukeshacounty.gov/thankfulforparks>

## Bowling

### Bluemound Bowl Brookfield

Open bowling 7 days a week!

*Where:* 12935 W. Bluemound Rd, Brookfield, WI

*Fee:* \$3/shoe rental; \$4/open bowling per game per person

*For Additional Information:* <https://www.bluemoundbowl.com/>

### Sunset Bowl Waukesha

Our Family Entertainment Center features a 24-lane bowling alley with automatic scoring and automatic bumpers and ramps for novice bowlers.

*Where:* 333 W. Sunset Dr, Waukesha, WI

*Fee:* \$3/shoe rental; prices vary due to day and time of day.

*For Additional Information:* <https://sunset-bowl.com/sports/bowling/>

## Craft Time!

### No-Sew Sock Snowman

By: [easypeasyandfun.com](http://easypeasyandfun.com)

What You'll Need:

- \* 1 white sock
- \* 1 sock in color for the hat
- \* Rice
- \* Rubber bands (or thread)
- \* Colorful buttons
- \* Ribbons
- \* Glue gun (or glue dots)
- \* Markers or paint
- \* Orange pom poms



What You'll Do:

1. Fill your white sock with rice. You will need a hefty amount.
2. Once you are happy with the amount and size, tie the top with a rubber band.
3. Take another rubber band and place in the middle - more to the upper side - of the rice-filled sock to form the head shape.
4. Glue the bottoms on the bottom portion using a glue gun or glue dots.
5. Draw the mouth and eyes with a black marker or black paint.
6. Make the nose out of two orange pom poms.
7. Add a ribbon for the scarf and use glue to secure it.
8. Cut off the excess white sock (ABOVE the rubber band!) or tuck it in the hat that will be made.
9. Cut the colored sock (the foot portion, without the heel). Roll it a bit and place it on the head of your snowman. You can leave it as is or secure with some glue.





# Additional Training and Events



Due to COVID-19 and social distancing, we currently are not having any in-person trainings or informational sessions. A survey will be distributed at a later time regarding in-person trainings.

## November Caregiver Connection

Caregiver Connection is a group for kinship and foster parents. This group will provide education, support, and networking for these caregivers residing in Waukesha County.

This is a virtual group on Microsoft Teams.

**November Topic:** Overcoming Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)

**Date:** November 18, 2021

**Time:** 6:00 p.m.

**To Register:** Email Rhonda Klinger at

[rklinger@waukeshacounty.gov](mailto:rklinger@waukeshacounty.gov) by November 17

## Waukesha County Foster Parent Information Sessions

Open to Waukesha County residents interested in learning more about foster care in our community. Also required for any new foster parents. The information sessions will be held virtually using Microsoft Teams.

**Date:** November 10, December 8, 2021

**Time:** 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Date:** November 18, December 16, 2021

**Time:** 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

**To Register:** Email Rhonda Klinger

([rklinger@waukeshacounty.gov](mailto:rklinger@waukeshacounty.gov)). Please include your full name, email, and the information session that you plan to attend.

## Virtual Sibling Support Group

This support group is for any sibling, age 12-16, who is part of an adoptive, guardianship, or foster family, and is struggling to find a positive outlet regarding their feelings on family life. Join to socially connect and discuss topics related to challenges that arise in adoptive/foster/guardianship family dynamics.

**Date:** November 16, 2021

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**For more information or to register:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/virtual-group-sibling-support-group-tickets-151676764285?aff=ebdsoporgprofile>

## HHS Holiday Hours

The HHS business office will be closed on the following dates in observance of the holidays.

**Thanksgiving:**

Thursday, November 25, 2021

Friday, November 26, 2021

**Christmas:**

Friday, December 24, 2021

Monday, December 27, 2021

**New Years:**

Friday, December 31, 2021

Monday, January 3, 2022

## NAMI Family Support Group (Virtual)

For family members and those with a loved one impacted by mental health conditions.

**When:** 3rd Tuesday of each month

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**For more information or to register, please contact**

**Denise:** 262-409-2743 or [denise@namiwaukesha.org](mailto:denise@namiwaukesha.org).

## NAMI Family Support Group (In Person)

For family members and those with a loved one impacted by mental health conditions. (Masks and social distancing will be required.)

**When:** 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

**Where:** Thirst Church, W360N7077 Brown St., Oconomowoc

**For more information or to register, please contact**

**Denise:** 262-409-2743 or [denise@namiwaukesha.org](mailto:denise@namiwaukesha.org).

## NAMI Parent Peer Support Group (Virtual Until Further Notice)

For parents and caregivers who have a child under the age of 18 who is affected by a mental health condition and/or emotional difficulties. Gain insight from the successes of others facing similar experiences.

**When:** 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

**For more information or to register, please contact**

**Denise:** 262-409-2743 or [denise@namiwaukesha.org](mailto:denise@namiwaukesha.org).

## Parents United Zoom

The mission of Parents United is to present timely and informative information for parents and professionals who work with children. They offer free Zoom presentations on a wide variety of subjects.

<http://parentsunitedwi.org/resources/>.

## Craft Time! Pinecone Indian Corn By: buggyandbuddy.com

What You'll Need:

- ✱ Pinecones
- ✱ Smaller pom poms in various colors
- ✱ Scissors
- ✱ Liquid glue or hot glue gun
- ✱ Raffia, corn husks, or crepe paper streamers



What You'll Do:

1. Push pom poms into the various spaces of your pinecone. Most likely, you won't need glue for this, but you can glue if you feel your pom poms are not secure.
2. Add the top to your Indian corn. You can cut some raffia or corn husks and hot glue them to the top. Then, use a single piece of raffia to tie the bunch together.
3. Trim off the ends.
4. As an alternative to the raffia, you can cut strips of crepe paper and glue them to the top of your pinecone. Once the glue is dry, you can scrunch up the crepe paper.



## Contact Numbers:

### Foster Care Social Workers:

Waukesha County Health & Human Services  
262-548-7212

Michelle Lim, Foster Care Supervisor  
262-970-4761

Cassie BeLow ..... 262-896-8574

Rhonda Klinger ..... 262-548-7240

Jennifer Mantei ..... 262-548-7250

Libby Sinclair ..... 262-548-7277

Hilary Smith ..... 262-548-7254

### Case Management Social Workers:

Angie Sadler, Ongoing Social Work Supervisor  
262-548-7272

Eric Calvino, Ongoing Social Work Supervisor  
262-548-7271

Eve Altizer, Ongoing Social Work Supervisor  
262-548-7267

Nicole Allende ..... 262-548-7265

Jamie Carter ..... 262-548-7264

Kimberly Dudzik ..... 262-548-7347

Stephanie Engle ..... 262-548-7424

Megan Fishler ..... 262-896-8570

Abbey Girman ..... 262-548-7695

Sharon Godwin ..... 262-548-7684

Laura Jahnke ..... 262-548-7359

Jessica Larsen ..... 262-548-7346

Maria Maurer ..... 262-548-7345

Jessica Palmersheim ..... 262-896-8281

Johanna Ploeger ..... 262-896-6857

Elizabeth Russo ..... 262-548-7349

Kim Sampson ..... 262-548-7273

Linda Senger ..... 262-548-7698

Brittany Sutton ..... 262-548-7262

Children's Mental Health Outreach  
262-548-7666

Medical Emergency: 911

Family Emergency: 211 or 262-547-3388



If an Allegation of Abuse or Neglect has been made against you, please call:

FASPP  
Norma Schoenberg  
920-922-9627